Please amend page 20, line 1 as follows:

~~Claims~~ **What is claimed is:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Original) An imaging agent which comprises a synthetic caspase-3 inhibitor labelled with an imaging moiety, wherein the caspase-3 inhibitor has a K_i for caspase-3 of less than 2000 nM, and wherein following administration of said labelled caspase-3 inhibitor to the mammalian body *in vivo*, the imaging moiety can be detected either externally in a non-invasive manner or *via* use of detectors designed for use *in vivo*

2. (Cancel) The imaging agent of Claim 1, where the synthetic caspase-3 inhibitor has a K_i for caspase-3 of less than 500 nM.

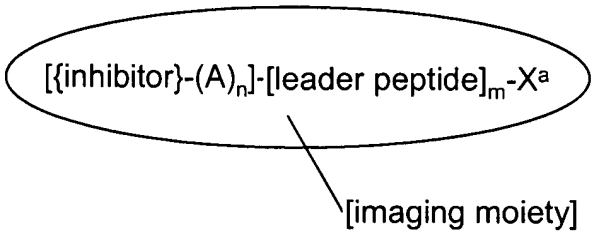
3. (Currently amended) The imaging agent of ~~Claims 1 or 2~~Claim 1, where the synthetic caspase-3 inhibitor has a molecular weight of 150 to 3000 Daltons.

4. (Currently amended) The imaging agent of ~~Claims 1 to 3~~Claim 1, where the imaging moiety comprises:
   (i) a radioactive metal ion;
   (ii) a paramagnetic metal ion;
   (iii) a gamma-emitting radioactive halogen;
   (iv) a positron-emitting radioactive non-metal;
   (v) a hyperpolarised NMR-active nucleus;
   (vi) an optical dye suitable for *in vivo* imaging.

5. (Currently amended) The imaging agent of ~~claims 1 to 4~~Claim 1, which further comprises a 4 to 20-mer leader peptide sequence, wherein said leader peptide

facilitates cell membrane transport from the outside to the inside of a mammalian cell *in vivo*.

6. (Currently amended) The imaging agent of Claim 5 where the synthetic caspase-3 inhibitor conjugate is of Formula I:



(Formula I)

where:

{inhibitor} is ~~the~~ a caspase-3 inhibitor with a K*i* for caspase-3 of less than 2000 nM ~~of claims 1 to 3~~;

[leader peptide] is as defined in Claim [~~4~~] 5 and is attached by either its' amine or carboxyl terminus;

$-(A)_n-$ is a linker group wherein each A is independently $-CR_2-$, $-CR=CR-$, $-C\equiv C-$, $-CR_2CO_2-$, $-CO_2CR_2-$, $-NRCO-$, $-CONR-$, $-NR(C=O)NR-$, $-NR(C=S)NR-$, $-SO_2NR-$, $-NRSO_2-$, $-CR_2OCR_2-$, $-CR_2SCR_2-$, $-CR_2NRCR_2-$, a C_{4-8} cycloheteroalkylene group, a C_{4-8} cycloalkylene group, a C_{5-12} arylene group, or a C_{3-12} heteroarylene group, an amino acid or a monodisperse polyethyleneglycol (PEG) building block;

R is independently chosen from H, C_{1-4} alkyl, C_{2-4} alkenyl, C_{2-4} alkynyl, C_{1-4} alkoxyalkyl or C_{1-4} hydroxyalkyl;

n is an integer of value 0 to 10,

m is 0 or 1;

and X^a is H, OH, Hal, NH_2, C_{1-4} alkyl, C_{1-4} alkoxy, C_{1-4} alkoxyalkyl, C_{1-4} hydroxyalkyl or X^a is the imaging moiety.

7. (Currently amended) The imaging agent of ~~Claims 1 to 6~~Claim 1, where the radioactive metal ion is a gamma emitter or a positron emitter.

8. (Original) The imaging agent of Claim 7, where the radioactive metal ion is ^{99m}Tc, ^{111}In, ^{64}Cu, ^{67}Cu, ^{67}Ga or ^{68}Ga.

9. (Currently amended) The imaging agent of ~~Claims 1 to 6~~Claim 1, where the paramagnetic metal ion is Gd(III), Mn(II) or Fe(III).

10. (Currently amended) The imaging agent of ~~Claims 1 to 6~~Claim 1, where the gamma-emitting radioactive halogen is ^{123}I.

11. (Currently amended) The imaging agent of ~~Claims 1 to 6~~Claim 1, where the positron-emitting radioactive non-metal is chosen from ^{18}F, ^{11}C, ^{124}I or ^{13}N.

12. (Currently amended) The imaging agent of ~~Claims 1 to 11~~Claim 1, where the synthetic caspase-3 inhibitor comprises one or more of the caspase-3 inhibitors defined in (i) to (ix):

(i) a tetrapeptide derivative of Formula III

$$Z^1\text{-Asp-Xaa1-Xaa2-Asp-}X^1 \quad \text{(III)}$$

where Z^1 is a metabolism inhibiting group attached to the N-terminus of the tetrapeptide;

Xaa1 and Xaa2 are independently any amino acid;

X^1 is an $-R^1$ or $-CH_2OR^2$ group attached to the carboxy terminus of the tetrapeptide;

where R^1 is H, $-CH_2F$, $-CH_2Cl$, C_{1-5} alkyl ,C_{1-5} alkoxy or $-(CH_2)_qAr^1$, where q is an integer of value 1 to 6 and Ar^1 is C_{6-12} aryl, C_{5-12} alkyl-aryl, C_{5-12} fluoro-substituted aryl, or C_{3-12} heteroaryl;

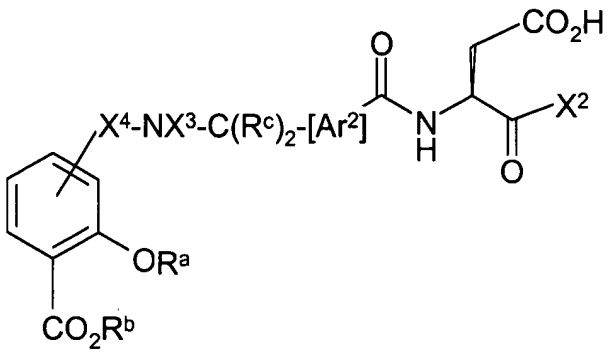
R^2 is C_{1-5} alkyl, C_{1-10} acyl or Ar^1;

(ii) a quinazoline or anilinoquinazoline;

(iii) a 2-oxindole sulphonamide;

(iv) an oxoazepinoindoline;

(v) a compound of Formula IV



(IV)

where X^2 is H, C_{1-5} alkyl or $-(CH_2)_r-(S)_s-(CH_2)_tAr^3$, where r and t are integers of value 0 to 6, s is 0 or 1 and Ar^3 is C_{6-12} aryl, C_{5-12} alkyl-substituted aryl, C_{5-12} halo-substituted aryl, or C_{3-12} heteroaryl;

Ar^2 is C_{6-12} aryl or C_{3-12} heteroaryl;

X^3 is an R^b group;

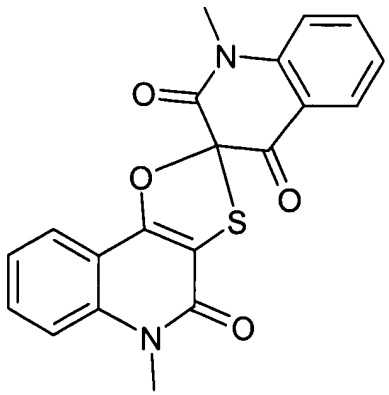
X^4 is $-SO_2-$ or $-CR_2-$

R^a is H, C_{1-5} alkyl or P^{GP} where P^{GP} is a protecting group;

R^b is an R^a group or C_{1-5} acyl;

each R^c is independently H or C_{1-5} alkyl;

(vi) a compound of Formula V



(V)

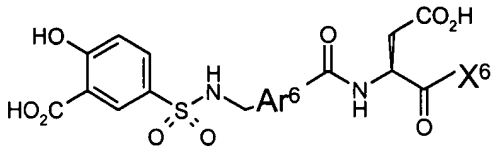
(vii) a pyrazinone;

(viii) a dipeptide of Formula VI:

Z^1-Val-Asp-CH_2-S-R^1 (VI)

where the -CH_2SR^1 group is attached to the carboxy terminus of the dipeptides, and Z^1 and R^1 are as defined for Formula (III);

(ix) a salicylic acid sulphonamide of Formula XI:



Formula XI

Where Ar^6 is a 5 or 6-membered C $_{4-6}$ aryl or heteroaryl ring, and X6 is H or –CH_2SR^2, where R2 is as defined above.

13. (Original) The imaging agent of Claim 12, where the synthetic caspase-3 inhibitor comprises:

(i) a tetrapeptide of Formula III; or

(ii) a 2-oxindole sulphonamide; or

(iii) a dipeptide of Formula VI.

14. (Currently amended) The imaging agent of ~~Claims 1 to 13~~Claim 1, where the synthetic caspase-3 inhibitor is selective for caspase-3 over caspase-1, by a factor of at least 50.

15. (Currently amended) The imaging agent of ~~Claims 13 or 14~~Claim 13, where the synthetic caspase-3 inhibitor comprises a tetrapeptide of Formula III or a dipeptide of Formula VI.

16. (Currently amended) A pharmaceutical composition which comprises the imaging agent of ~~claims 1 to 15~~ Claim 1 together with a biocompatible carrier, in a form suitable for mammalian administration.

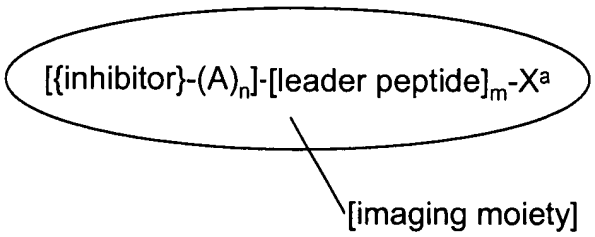
17. (Currently amended) A radiopharmaceutical composition which comprises the imaging agent of ~~claims 1 to 15~~ Claim 1 wherein the imaging moiety is radioactive, together with a biocompatible carrier, in a form suitable for mammalian administration.

18. (Original) The radiopharmaceutical composition of claim 17, where the imaging moiety comprises a positron-emitting radioactive non-metal or a gamma-emitting radioactive halogen.

19. (Original) The radiopharmaceutical composition of claim 17, where the imaging moiety comprises a radioactive metal ion.

20. (Currently amended) A conjugate of a synthetic caspase-3 inhibitor with a ligand, wherein the caspase-3 inhibitor has a K_i for caspase-3 of less than ~~2000~~ 500 nM, and wherein said ligand is capable of forming a metal complex with a radioactive or paramagnetic metal ion.

21. (Currently amended) The conjugate of Claim 20, of Formula Ib:



(Ib)

where ~~A, n, m and X^a are as defined in Claim 6~~

$-(A)_n-$ is a linker group wherein each A is independently $-CR_2-$, $-CR=CR-$, $-C\equiv C-$, $-CR_2CO_2-$, $-CO_2CR_2-$, $-NRCO-$, $-CONR-$, $-NR(C=O)NR-$, $-NR(C=S)NR-$, $-SO_2NR-$, $-NRSO_2-$, $-CR_2OCR_2-$, $-CR_2SCR_2-$, $-CR_2NRCR_2-$, a C_{4-8} cycloheteroalkylene group, a C_{4-8} cycloalkylene group, a C_{5-12} arylene group,

or a C_{3-12} heteroarylene group, an amino acid or a monodisperse polyethyleneglycol (PEG) building block;

R is independently chosen from H, C_{1-4} alkyl, C_{2-4} alkenyl, C_{2-4} alkynyl, C_{1-4} alkoxyalkyl or C_{1-4} hydroxyalkyl;

n is an integer of value 0 to 10,

m is 0 or 1;

and X^a is H, OH, Hal, NH_2, C_{1-4} alkyl, C_{1-4} alkoxy, C_{1-4} alkoxyalkyl, C_{1-4} hydroxyalkyl or X^a is the imaging moiety.

22. (Currently amended) The conjugate of ~~Claims 20 or 21~~Claim 20, wherein the ligand is a chelating agent.

23. (Original) The conjugate of Claim 22, wherein the chelating agent has a diaminedioxime, N_2S_2, or N_3S donor set.

24. (Currently amended) A kit for the preparation of the radiopharmaceutical composition of Claim 19, which comprises the conjugate of a synthetic caspase-3 inhibitor with a ligand, wherein the caspase-3 inhibitor has a K_i for caspase-3 of less than 500 nM, and wherein said ligand is capable of forming a metal complex with a radioactive or paramagnetic metal ion.~~Claims 20 to 23.~~

25. (Original) The kit of Claim 24, where the radioactive metal ion is ^{99m}Tc, and the kit further comprises a biocompatible reductant.

26. (Currently amended) A kit for the preparation of the radiopharmaceutical composition of Claim 18, which comprises a precursor, said precursor being a non-radioactive derivative of ~~the~~ a caspase-3 inhibitor ~~of claims 1 to 15~~, wherein the caspase-3 inhibitor has a K_i for caspase-3 of less than 2000 nM, wherein said non-radioactive derivative is capable of reaction with a source of the positron-emitting radioactive non-metal or gamma-emitting radioactive halogen to give the desired radiopharmaceutical.

27. (Original) The kit of claim 26 where the precursor is in sterile, apyrogenic form.

28. (Currently amended) The kit of ~~Claims 26 or 27~~Claim 26, where the source of the positron-emitting radioactive non-metal or gamma-emitting radioactive halogen is chosen from:

~~(i)~~ a halide ion or F^+ or I^+; or

~~(ii)~~ b an alkylating agent chosen from an alkyl or fluoroalkyl halide, tosylate, triflate or mesylate;

29. (Currently amended) The kit of ~~Claims 26 to 28~~Claim 26, where the non-radioactive derivative is chosen from:

~~(i)~~ a an organometallic derivative such as a trialkylstannane or a trialkylsilane;

~~(ii)~~ b a derivative containing an alkyl halide, alkyl tosylate or alkyl mesylate for nucleophilic substitution;

~~(iii)~~c a derivative containing an aromatic ring activated towards nucleophilic or electrophilic substitution;

~~(iv)~~d a derivative containing a functional group which undergoes facile alkylation;

~~(v)~~ e a derivative which alkylates thiol-containing compounds to give a thioether-containing product.

30. (Currently amended) The kit of ~~claims 26 to 29~~claim 26, where the precursor is bound to a solid phase.

31. (Currently amended) Use of the imaging agent of ~~claims 1 to 15~~Claim 1 in a method of diagnosis of a caspase-3 implicated disease state of the mammalian body, wherein said mammal is previously administered with the pharmaceutical composition which comprises the imaging agent of Claim 1 together with a biocompatible carrier, in a form suitable for mammalian administration ~~of claim 16~~,

or the radiopharmaceutical composition which comprises the imaging agent of Claim 1 wherein the imaging moiety is radioactive, together with a biocompatible carrier, in a form suitable for mammalian administration ~~of claims 17 to 19~~.